APPENDIX I.

[Vide answer to starred question No. 873 asked by Sri K. Sattanatha Karayalar at the meeting of the Legislative Assembly held on 5th November 1958, page 616 supra.]

Statement indicating the position of potato crops in the Nilgiris, the reason for the deterioration in the yield of potato and the steps taken by the Agriculture Deparment as remedial measures to improve potato crop.

I. It is a fact in general that the yield of potato is deteriorating in Nilgiris year after year especially outside 5 miles radius of Ooty Town, due to the following reasons :

II. *Reasons for deterioration in potato production.*—(*a*) A fairly well distributed rainfall is received within a radius of about 5 miles around Ootacamund. So the crop in this locality is fairly satisfactory year after year. But in other places outside the above belt, in places like Kundha, Coonoor and Kotagiri the rainfall distribution is erratic, so much so, failures of crops are often met with.

(*b*) Use of deteriorated seeds which are fully affected with different kinds of virus diseases.

(*c*) Soil erosion.

(*d*) Want of organic matter in the soil due to insufficient application of either cattle manure or green manure.

III. *Steps taken by the department to increase the potato yield.*—(*a*) As regards the reasons stated in (*a*) above it is quite necessary to reorientate the cropping plan of this district. It is desirable to intensify potato cultivation in and round about Ooty where the conditions are quite suitable for potato cultivation and reduce potato cultivation to the minimum in other areas, and go in for coffee, tea, blugum and wattle. With this idea in view, a scheme for the establishment of a plantation division with the sole idea of intensifying and extending the above crops by way of giving loans and technical advice is under consideration.

(*b*) As regards replacement of the present deteriorated seeds used by the ryots, there is a scheme for indenting 120 tons of seeds from Scotland and if the above quantity is supplied, it will be multiplied and distributed to the ryots. Already six State Seed Farms are established and eight more will be started in the year 1958–59 and in the 300 acres under Potato States Seed Farms and with the anticipated supply of 120 tons of nucleus disease free seeds, it is possible to replace the local seeds in five years in the whole district. The supply of these seeds from United Kingdom is awaited.

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(*c*) *Soil erosion* is being tackled as a special scheme by Agricultural Engineering section and over 50 per cent of the area will be bench terraced during the Second Five-Year Plan.

(*d*) To augment the organic manurial resources, the special staff under the local manurial resources is concentrating on the increased production of compost in addition tow hat is done by the regular staff in the Block. Further Green Manure drive is being launched and sufficient quantity of green manure seeds are being produced to cover as large an area as possible under green manure. It is estimated that in 1959–60 about 2,000 to 3,000 acres will be under green manure.

TAMIL NADU LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
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